



**Greetings from Senator Hardiman...**

## **SENATOR HARDIMAN CO-SPONSORS RESOLUTION SEEKING FAIR COMPETITION FOR FURNITURE MANUFACTURING**

State Senator Wayne Kuipers, R-Holland, introduced a Resolution urging Congress to enact legislation that eliminates unfair advantages that Federal Prison Industries have in competition for business, particularly furniture manufacturing.

In 1934, Federal Prison Industries (FPI) was created as a government corporation. The system operates more than 100 factories, utilizes more than 20,000 inmate workers and compiles total sales of approximately \$500 million annually from over 150 products.

While the role that FPI plays in promoting the development of marketable skills among inmates has its merits, the operation enjoys unfair advantages over private sector manufacturers. Beyond the obvious wage and benefit advantages inmate workers offer, other factors that favor FPI include governmental procurement policies, including a "mandatory source" requirement that severely limits competition.

As our economy is facing economic hardships we need to encourage the federal government to step in and help the hardworking families of West Michigan. It doesn't make sense that honest law-abiding citizens are competing with federal prison inmates for wages.

In the past, legislation has been considered in Congress to directly address the issue of the preferential treatment afforded to FPI in bidding for government contracts. Furniture manufactures are in need of impartial policies in order to preserve jobs and to restore fairness in the marketplace.

If passed, copies of Resolution 103 will be sent to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the members of the Michigan congressional delegation and the Office of the President of the United States.

## **SENATOR HARDIMAN VOTES TO INCREASE FUNDING FOR GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY**

As a member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Higher Education, we reported House Bill 4396 (S-1) out of committee on Wednesday, June 4, 2003 that increased per pupil funding for Grand Valley State University (GVSU). HB 4396 (S-1) provides funding for all 15 of Michigan's public universities.

Under the Senate proposal, GVSU would receive \$4006 per student in state funding, an increase of \$550 over the current year. To garner support for these changes I have worked with both Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema (R-Wyoming) and committee chair Senator Mike Goschka (R-Brant).



This has been one of my legislative priorities to bring all public universities to a minimum \$4000 per student. I have been working with my colleagues to reverse the historic under funding at GVSU and other universities.

Today, we took the first step towards equity for higher education funding in this state.

The subcommittee also rejected Governor Granholm's plan to sharply reduce tuition scholarships at private colleges, like Calvin, Aquinas, Cornerstone, and Davenport in the Grand Rapids area. The private college scholarships will be reduced slightly under the Senate's proposal, but will still provide much needed support for these students. "Families who send their children to private colleges pay taxes as well. I strongly believe the state should help those families offset some tuition costs as well as for students who attend our other higher education institutions.

HB 4396 (S-1) will be considered by the full Senate Appropriations Committee as early as next week..

## **MICHIGAN SENATE CLOSER TO BALANCED BUDGET WITHOUT RAISING TAXES**

The Republican-controlled Michigan Senate adopted on Thursday, June 05, 2003 four funding proposals by Governor Granholm and has put forward its own legislation to generate more than \$120 million in much-needed state revenue.

Through its own legislative initiatives, the Senate has proposed or adopted more than \$120 million in new revenue sources without the need to raise taxes. Most of the revenue comes from the Michigan Driver Responsibility Program, which adds additional license fees for habitually bad drivers with seven or more points, and the Claim It Correctly program, which stops property owners from receiving more than one Homestead Property Tax Credit.

The four governor-sponsored proposals will generate nearly \$18.8 million by making sure Michigan tax code is applied as the Legislature intended. These proposals would: impose the same income tax on non-resident casino winnings as for Michigan residents; clarify that all non-resident business income earned in Michigan will be taxed at the U.S. constitutional limit; require "flow-through" entities to pay Michigan Income Tax on distributive income of non-residents; and extend corporate officer tax liability provisions to limited liability corporation and partnership members in similar positions.

It has been the goal of the Michigan State Senate to maintain a balanced budget without raising the taxes of our hardworking families.

## **JUNE IS NATIONAL HOMEOWNERS MONTH**

While the nation's overall home ownership rate is at an all-time high, a substantial gap still exists; nearly three-fourths of non-Hispanic whites are homeowners, while less than half of African Americans and Hispanics own their own homes. To bridge this gap, last year President Bush announced a White House initiative to increase the number of minority homeowners by 5.5 million by the year 2010.

Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Mel Martinez is leading the effort to harness the resources of the public/private entities to address the homeownership gap through the "Blueprint for the American Dream" partnership. To find out more information on this initiative, go to [www.hud.gov/blueprint](http://www.hud.gov/blueprint).



## **FEDERAL FUNDING FOR MICHIGAN MERIT ANNOUNCED**

Congress' approval of nearly \$706 million in aid to Michigan - including \$365 million in addition to Medicaid funding - enables the Merit Award Scholarship to continue making a college education more affordable for thousands of Michigan students next year. The federal assistance makes it possible for the Michigan Legislature to fund their budget priorities without raising taxes or resorting to drastic budget cuts. With the federal government helping Michigan cover Medicaid costs, the pressure to use the Merit Award funding for other purposes no longer exists.

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

The Hardiman Herald by Senator Bill Hardiman is designed to provide residents and organizations with a timely update of his activity in Lansing. If you have any questions or do not wish to receive this e-mail, please contact Senator Hardiman's office.

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